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ABSTRACT

This report addresses the long-term educational responsibility of helping young people become more knowledgeable about the meaning and values of the U.S. Constitution in their personal and civic life. The Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution and the upcoming Bicentennial of the U.S. Bill of Rights in 1991 present the opportunity to refocus citizenship education on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The National Education Association's 1918 report separated education for good citizenship from teaching about the Constitution in the social studies curriculum. By the 1960s and 1970s, the study of constitutional government had to compete for attention in the social studies curriculum with an increasingly diverse set of topics. The result of this diminution of interest in the Constitution was also apparent in examination of social studies textbooks. The Bicentennial celebration has stimulated the production of materials by established national organizations for the study of the Constitution, and these resources can be used to revitalize instruction about the U.S. Constitution. A review of materials from several of these organizations is provided. (SM)

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STUDYING THE CONSTITUTION: CAPITALIZING ON TWO BICENTENNIALS

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Studying the Constitution: Capitalizing on Two Bicentennials

As celebratory events are reaching their climax, a *Curriculum Report* dealing with the Constitution's Bicentennial may not seem especially useful. After all, most schools and communities have long since made their plans for commemorative activities and have started putting them into operation. However, careful second thought reveals two substantial reasons for presenting this discussion.

The 200th birthday of the Bill of Rights is just a few years down the road. It is not too soon to begin making plans to relate, adapt, and expand present programs for 1991.

A more persuasive reason is to remind secondary school administrators and their professional associates of the importance of helping young people become more knowledgeable about the meaning and values of the U.S. Constitution in their personal and civic lives.

This is an ongoing, timeless instructional responsibility, one that cannot be satisfied by a flurry of special assemblies, pageants, parades, and speeches by important people. This *CR* speaks mainly to this long-term educational responsibility.

The text from this point on is drawn from *Education on the Constitution in Secondary Schools: Teaching Strategies and Materials for the Bicentennial and Beyond,* by John J. Patrick, Richard C. Remy, and Mary Jane Turner, and published by the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education. We are grateful to the authors and the Clearinghouse for their permission to use this study.

Why All the Fuss?

Mark W. Cannon, staff director of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution, wrote: "We should celebrate the Constitution not only for its role in American history, but for its significance to modern government, its pivotal place in the American psyche, and its role in the continuation of our personal freedom" (Cannon, 1983).

Throughout its literature the Commission has emphasized the educational opportunities afforded by the bicentennials to develop and nurture among all the people a greater appreciation of our constitutional heritage. At the same time, many organizations and people are focusing their efforts on enriching instruction in K-12 classrooms.

R. Freeman Butts, the William F. Russell Professor Emeritus at Columbia University, for example, proposed that the fundamental ideas and values upon which our constitutional order is built should be the core of sustained and explicit study carried on throughout the school years.

Similarly, such organizations as the American Bar Association, American Historical Association, American Political Science Association, and the Center for Civic Education have linked their interest in civic education in our schools to the bicentennials. They see the celebration as an opportunity—and serious study of the Constitution as the perfect vehicle—for achieving improvement of citizenship education.

What's the Problem?

State mandates, public expectations, and educational traditions seem to indicate that there is already considerable instruction going on about the Constitution. Is there a problem with the quality of that instruction? Just what is it that Americans know and believe about the Constitution?

Michael Kammen (1986) discusses public ignorance and misunderstanding of the Constitution in his recent study, *A Machine That Would Go of Itself.* He notes that although Americans tend to have great pride in the Constitution, this veneration is not accompanied by either adequate knowledge nor significant understanding. According to Kammen, "The Constitution is too often neglected or poorly taught in American schools."

A recent poll of 1,004 Americans, appearing in the March 2, 1987, *Washington Post*, found that only a slight majority of the respondents knew that the purpose of the Constitution was to create a federal government and define its powers. Almost half the group thought the Marxist idea, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need" can be found in the document.

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The survey also found that 64 percent of those polled believed that the Founders established English as the national language; 60 percent thought the president alone can appoint a justice to the Supreme Court; and nearly 50 percent believed that the president can suspend constitutional protections in times of national emergency and war.

What do students understand about the meaning of democracy? Results of studies by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that a large number of students, especially 9 and 13-year-olds, have great difficulty describing what is meant by "democracy" on an open-ended question. While about three-fourths of 17-year-olds could give some description of democracy, only 42 percent of the 13-year-olds and 2 percent of the 9-year-olds provided acceptable answers in a 1976 assessment.

A study of the political involvement of 1,000 Pennsylvania high school seniors by Roberta Sigel and Marilyn Hoskin (1981) revealed similar results. Forty-four percent of the students gave "simplistic" definitions of democracy, and another 14 percent gave no definition or an incorrect one. Sigel and Hoskin concluded, "most students exhibit some cognizance of democratic principles, but it is not at all clear whether they comprehend their meaning and implications. At times one cannot help but think that these principles are only slogans to the students."

Most American youngsters seem to be aware of the purpose of basic rights included in the Constitution. The majority of 13 and 17-year-olds in the 1970 and 1976 NAEP assessments recognized the rights to privacy, freedom of religion, and freedom of expressions granted by the Constitution.

Similarly, in the 1982 assessment, 62 percent of the 17-year-olds correctly identified the protection against double jeopardy.

For many students, awareness of rights is the key component in their concept of democracy. Thus, when defining democracy, 48 percent of the students in the Sigel and Hoskin study referred to some aspect of individual freedom (religion, speech, travel, career choice).

State mandates, public expectations, and educational traditions seem to indicate that there is already considerable instruction going on about the Constitution.

Unfortunately, this skews complete understanding of the Constitution. Morris Janowitz's (1986) study of civic education in American schools points to excessive emphasis on individual and minority group rights and lack of attention to community obligations and responsibilities. He also claims that core civic values, which encourage national cohesion, have been slighted.

Yet another problem relates to beliefs as opposed to knowledge. In the 1950s, the Purdue Youth Opinion Polls found youth to be more "authoritarian" than "democratic" in their attitudes toward the Bill of Rights. While students in the 1950s did support some rights, such as trial by jury and protection against arrest without formal charges, they were less supportive of many other aspects of the Bill of Rights.

Teenagers of the day endorsed censorship of books, newspapers, magazines, and other media as "protection of the public against improper ideas." Many students also thought wiretapping should be used by the police to scrutinize behavior. Sixty percent of the students in the 1952 Purdue Poll thought, "the police or FBI may sometimes be right in giving a man the 'third degree' to make him talk."

In his 1983 study, Elam gave students the same 15 statements about various aspects of the Bill of Rights used in the 1952 Purdue Poll. An even greater proportion of today's students displayed anti-democratic attitudes on 8 of the 15 items than did students in 1952. For example, a larger percentage of today's students were willing to allow a police search without a warrant, to deny legal counsel to criminals, and to accept restrictions on religious freedom.

While the Class of 1984 was slightly more democratic than the Class of 1952 on several other items, the number of "uncertain" responses also increased. Elam found it "discouraging to see so many youngsters uncertain of so many traditional freedoms."

Both the 1950 Purdue Polls and the Elam republication found a positive correlation between high knowledge scores and "democratic responses to statements about constitutional issues." In short, the higher students scored on the knowledge test, the more likely they were to hold pro-democratic attitudes. These findings are supported by research that clearly shows that education is the most powerful predictor of civil liberties tolerance and support for other democratic principles embodied in the Constitution.

What's Been Missing Lately?

During the first hundred years of our nationhood, great importance was attached to education about the Constitution, reflecting the need for the new republic to develop a common symbol of political identity and legitimacy.

By the last decade of the nineteenth century and at the start of the twentieth, attention to the Constitution in secondary schools declined dramatically, however. Progressive educators reduced the constitutional concerns of civic education in favor of a "problem approach" to teach citizens to deal with state and local social problems.

This development was clearly reflected in the National Education Association's influential 1918 report, *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education.* The report and the contributing work of the NEA's Committee on the Social Studies, in effect, divorced education for good citizenship from teaching about the Constitution in the social studies curriculum.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the study of constitutional government had come to compete for attention in the social studies with an increasingly diverse set of topics related to concerns about current social issues and problems. These topics include energy education, environmental education, gun control education, future studies, consumer education, free enterprise education, and global education among others.

It was also during this period that a "new social history" dominated scholarship and teaching of university historians. Political history, including constitutional history, was displaced from its central position in the curriculum.

What seems to have been missing in curriculum development and teaching is a satisfactory blending of social history and constitutional history, of current social issues and enduring principles of constitutional government.

Michael Kammen emphasizes the need to "strike a balance" of social and political (constitutional) history. He argues that "successful integration of these two types of historical 'events' is surely a major challenge to historical scholarship during the decades ahead."

How It Looks in the Books

The result of this diminution of interest in the Constitution is also apparent if we examine American history, government, civics, and law-related education curricula. In 1980, three scholars analyzed the most widely-used eighth and eleventh-grade American history texts, the ninth and twelfth-grade civics and American government texts, and law-related education materials.

John Patrick, who was charged with examining the American history texts, found that all the textbooks he reviewed included a copy of the Constitution with annotations and other instructional aids. As for coverage of constitutional topics, less than 12 percent of the content of the books studied pertained directly to instruction about the Constitution—its origins, development, and content.

The eleventh-grade books devoted from 9 percent to 11 percent of their content to the Constitution and the eighth grade books spent from 7 percent to 11 percent. These findings led Patrick to conclude that "coverage of constitutional topics is not excessive. Teachers and students who rely on these textbooks will not receive an overdose of constitutional history."

Treatment of the Constitutional Convention was very brief in the books Patrick reviewed. Only 4 of the 10 history textbooks had more than four pages on the topic. The delegates were portrayed as men of good will who sought to resolve crucial political problems that threatened the life of the republic.

None of the books discussed the ambiguous division of powers between the national government and the states resulting from the Constitutional Convention. Nor did these texts connect ambiguity about the locus of sovereignty within the federal union to development of critical constitutional issues that threatened national stability and unity during the nineteenth century.

All the textbooks Patrick analyzed included discussion of constitutional amendments, judicial interpretations of the Constitution, and adaptation of the Constitution through custom and usage. Issues related to the meaning of federalism, separation of powers, civil rights, and judicial review were treated within the texts' chronological framework. Treatment of these topics, however, was often very thin.

Richard Remy analyzed five twelfth grade American government textbooks and five ninth grade civics textbooks. Less than one-quarter of the content in any of the books reviewed was devoted directly to instruction about constitutional topics. Government textbooks devoted from 12 to 23 percent of their content to constitutional coverage; civics textbooks ranged from 13 percent to 21 percent.

While all the texts reviewed included copies of the Constitution, none did a very good job of presenting the document in ways that facilitated students' reading the Constitution with meaning. Three of the government texts did not annotate the Constitution, and in most other books the annotations were quite limited.

Surprisingly, the government textbooks did not clearly define the concept of constitution. Further, both the government and civics textbooks neglected completely to define, explain, and demonstrate the Constitution's pervasive role in our political system. None of these books, for example, attempted to develop for students ideas about the purposes served by the Constitution as both symbol of the American nation and as a daily instrument of government. In short, these texts largely overlooked the impact of the Constitution for both our personal and our collective national life.

The Constitution embodies principles of governmental organization that establish the character of the American system of government. Scholars often identify separation of powers, federalism, judicial review, and limited government as major constitutional principles. How did the government and civics textbooks treat such principles?

Discussion of constitutional principles usually appears early in these books, either in a chapter on the Constitution or in a chapter on its origins. None of the government or civics books in the Remy study treated major constitutional principles as concepts that students could learn and then use in their further study of national government and American politics.

Instead, after initial definition, the principles rarely appeared again in the textbooks reviewed. Thus, students were not being asked to use a principle to organize information or help explain some aspect of government. Nor was subsequent material often presented as an illustration of a constitutional principle.

While all the texts reviewed included copies of the Constitution, none did a very good job of presenting the document in ways that facilitated students' reading the Constitution with meaning.

At the same time that Patrick and Remy examined history and government texts, Mary Jane Turner studied the treatment of the Constitution in school-based, non-traditional programs. Her analysis of law-related education materials led her to conclude that such themes as constitutionalism, the purposes of a constitution, the underlying principles of the American Constitution, the purposes of a government, and the relationship of the individual to the government were not coherently addressed in typical law-related classes.

In sum, the textbook studies revealed common deficiencies in textbook treatments of the Constitution, including shallow treatment of basic constitutional principles, lack of historical continuity in treating issues, inadequate descriptions of Supreme Court decisions, lack of attention to political dynamics associated with processes of constitutional choice, and insufficient attention to connections between constitutionally relevant issues and events.

The three analyses noted above were completed in 1981, and all three scholars have since noted that most textbook authors have in the years since improved their coverage of constitutional issues. The better textbooks do provide adequate, if limited, factual descriptions of constitutional material. They are also useful in attaining certain objectives, such as transmission of information and development of specialized vocabulary.

The three analyses can be found in Howard D. Mehlinger, ed., *Teaching About the Constitution in American Secondary Schools* (Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association), 1981.

The extent of improvements has not been enough, however, to dissuade many educators from concluding that additional and significant improvement is not needed. As late as 1986, the staff of the Center for Civic Education noted that nowhere in the general education curriculum are students taught about the philosophical underpinnings of the Constitution, its historical antecedents, or the basic principles. Students are seldom asked, much less required, to apply enduring principles to present-day problems. Even more serious, perhaps, they do not have to grapple with such issues as the role of the citizen in a pluralistic democracy.

Exempli Gratia

Schools across the country have been creating and using an unbelievably diverse series of programs and activities to mark our Constitution's 200th birthday.

The following resources are available to schools from several established national organizations. These resources will be helpful not only in developing commemorative activities but also in reviewing and strengthening instruction about the United States Constitution.

Most of the programs described here will be useful long after the bicentennial celebrations are over. Although price was not a criterion for selection, it is interesting to note that programs discussed tend to be inexpensive. Thus, costs for implementing them are modest.

Schools across the country have been creating and using an unbelievably diverse series of programs and activities to mark our Constitution's 200th birthday.

The developers also seem to have taken into account typical course organization patterns and have prepared materials that fit easily into ongoing classes. All the materials are designed to improve and enhance the use of textbooks in American history, government, and civics. Furthermore, they:

- Have a cogent rationale that justifies the use of the program and materials in secondary schools
- Have clearly stated learning objectives that reflect various kinds and levels of cognitive and affective outcomes
- Have accurate content that reflects current scholarship
- Emphasize core concepts and values of American constitutional government and public issues about the meaning and application of these concepts and values to particular cases in history and contemporary society
- Emphasize development of the Constitution in American history and its current vitality as a symbol of American nationhood and as a practical instrument of government
- Have a framework for organizing knowledge or potential for successful use with such a structure or framework
- Emphasize opportunities for learning and practicing skills in analytic and critical thinking and civic decision making
- Are self-contained (require neither extensive preparation by teachers nor additional resources)
- Are suitable in reading level and instructional design for the student audience
- Have great potential for improving education on the Constitution for the bicentennial year of 1987 and for many years beyond.

PROJECT '87, American Historical Association and American Political Science Association, 1527 New Hampshire Ave., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Project '87, which was established in 1976, initially emphasized scholarly research on the Constitution and the constitutional processes. By 1980, this focus was expanded to include the development of programs aimed at improving instruction about the Constitution in schools and colleges. Four programs by Project '87 are described here.

- *Lessons on the Constitution.* These lessons are designed to support existing courses in civics, American history, and American government. The authors of the materials engaged in a lengthy development process involving scholars, specialists in instructional design, and teachers. This process included planning, lesson design and writing, field testing, and evaluation phases. The result is 60 lessons with accompanying teacher materials bound together in a single volume. The lessons can be duplicated for use by students.

The materials are organized into five chapters, four of which consist of lessons and one that contains primary source documents. The four chapters are: "Origins and Purposes of the Constitution," "Principles of Government in the Constitution," "Amending and Interpreting the Constitution," and "Landmark Cases of the Supreme Court." The lessons included in the chapters were written to expand and enrich what is typically found in basal textbooks and to give students a better understanding of the Constitution and constitutionalism.

Thus, it is expected that teachers will use the lessons individually and in groups to improve instruction about the Constitution in civics, American government, and American history courses.

All the lessons provide an overview, contain a clear statement of objectives, point out connections to textbooks, and present procedures for teaching. They encourage active learning by requiring frequent opportunities to practice new skills and apply new knowledge. Teaching/learning strategies are varied to promote student interest and motivation.

- *Video Programs on the Constitution.* Project '87 is cooperating with the Agency for Instructional Technology (AIT) to develop six video programs on the Constitution for use in secondary school American history, government, and civics courses.

In 1980-81, AIT and Project '87 conducted research to identify and assess the quality of multimedia materials for teaching about the Constitution. Because there was a clear need to strengthen such materials, a planning meeting of historians, political scientists, secondary school specialists on curriculum development, and instructional media and design specialists was convened in 1984.

This group settled on three general program objectives. The video programs should: "show that the original structural aspects of the Constitution have important interrelations and that, when viewed as a whole, the Constitution

balances the giving and withholding of powers and rights to the government;" "show that the Constitution is a document that can be changed and has been changed as a result of the need to resolve conflict, and because of changing political, economic, and social situations;" and "present recurring constitutional themes and issues that will stimulate young people to think more critically about the Constitution and improve their decision-making skills."

Based on these objectives, content themes and expected student outcomes were formulated for six video programs. Preliminary titles of the six programs are: *Constitutional Government: The Rule of Law in a Free Society; Checks and Balances in the Federal Government; Federalism: Balance of Power Between National and State Governments; Freedom of Speech; Equal Protection of the Laws;* and *The Constitution and the Economy.*

- *"The Blessings of Liberty": A Poster Panel Exhibit.* "The Blessings of Liberty" consists of 12 full-color posters accompanied by a user's guide that provides an essay about the events and leaders that are depicted; lessons for using the posters with students in grades 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12; a bibliography for adult reading/discussion groups; and suggestions for mounting the exhibit and coordinating it with community bicentennial programs.

Students are seldom asked, much less required, to apply enduring principles to present-day problems. Even more serious, perhaps, they do not have to grapple with such issues as the role of the citizen in a pluralistic democracy.

The intent of the exhibit is to graphically illustrate the major questions about the Constitution: What government did the Constitution replace? What were the intractable problems that convinced the Founders to write a new Constitution? When was the Constitution written? What were the arguments for and against its adoption? How was the document ratified? How did the plans for our capital city reflect the design of the Constitution? What is included in the Bill of Rights and how was it passed? What part did the Supreme Court play in the early history of the Constitution? How were those people originally left out of the body politic incorporated since 1787?

Answers to these questions are provided as exploratory texts written by noted constitutional scholars.

Graphic art was selected as the creative medium because it can inform, illustrate, and inspire. The intent of the series is to "elicit interest, compassion, identification . . . a thirst for greater knowledge."

- *This Constitution: A Bicentennial Chronicle. This Constitution* is not a curriculum, nor is its focus primarily on classroom materials. It is, however, a particularly useful resource for teachers, because it can link them to others in their area who are preparing materials and programs. It is published quarterly by Project '87 and contains articles and essays by well-known theorists on various constitutional themes; reprints of original documents; listings of educational films, publications, organizations, and institutions that are participating in bicentennial activities; information about state and local programs; and selected lessons from a variety of sources.

These lessons are representative of the best that are available and they can be reproduced for use by students free of charge if properly attributed.

THE JEFFERSON FOUNDATION, 1529 18th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 10036.

The Jefferson Foundation has organized programs to involve citizens in the study of the United States Constitution. A major part of this initiative is the *Jefferson Meeting on the Constitution,* which is "what a constitutional convention might look like if delegates were to gather to discuss the adequacy of the Constitution and its provisions for contemporary American society." The purpose of the Jefferson Meeting is to educate rather than pursue political change, however.

The Foundation suggests two possible settings for the meetings—one involving the community and one the classroom. Although the format for the community and classroom meetings differ, both depend on the same topics and the same carefully crafted discussion guides.

The teacher's guide gives ample information for setting up and implementing a Jefferson Meeting. Student role descriptions, rules for a plenary, follow-up activities, an opinion poll, and evaluation questions are included. The guide suggests that meetings are probably most effective if conducted after students have developed an understanding of the Constitution, the structure of American government, and the events and debates surrounding the Constitutional Convention.

The meeting itself involves setting the agenda, meeting in issue committees, holding a plenary session, and conducting a follow-up session—activities that take approximately 10 class sessions to accomplish.

During the issue meetings, students are introduced to a particular topic, make a decision whether to do research on the pro or con side, and prepare the arguments that will be presented in the plenary.

The plenary is conducted somewhat like a debate and features timed pro and con argument followed by opportunities for questions and comments from the delegates. Follow-up sessions include reports that synthesize and summarize the plenary debate.

Discussion guides for student use during this 10-day sequence take up the following issues:

- *To Make and Alter Their Constitutions of Government* (Implications of using Article V of the Constitution to call a national constitutional convention)
- *The Plain Simple Business of Election* (electoral college reforms)
- *So Great a Power to Any Single Person* (Proposals to limit the president to a single six-year term)
- *The Road of Republican Government* (Proposals to change congressional terms)
- *To Control Abuses of Government* (Proposals on legislative initiative and veto powers)
- *During Good Behavior* (Proposals to establish terms of office for the federal judiciary).

These discussion guides can either be purchased from the Foundation or be reproduced with attribution.

The teacher's guide suggests models for expanding the basic program by adding more issues and for involving several schools, a whole school, or the community in full-day meetings. A simplified adaptation is also suggested for less advanced students.

CENTER FOR CIVIC EDUCATION, 5146 Douglas Fir Rd., Calabasas, Calif. 91302.

The Center for Civic Education organized the National Bicentennial Competitions on the Constitution and Bill of Rights, which will be conducted from 1987 through 1991. Each year the program will involve 10 classes at each of three school levels—elementary, junior high school, and senior high school—in one or more school systems in each of the nation's congressional districts. Classes can compete in schools, congressional districts, states, and finally in national competitions to be held in Washington, D.C.

Classes are expected to prepare for the competitions by using specially prepared study units on the Constitution and Bill of Rights that can complement and be integrated into the required curricula at the appropriate levels. The general goals of the units are to foster civic competence and civic responsibility among students. Their content focuses on:

- The philosophical underpinnings of the Constitution
- The historical antecedents to the Constitution and Bill of Rights
- The founding period
- The Constitution in the nineteenth century
- The Constitution in the twentieth century
- The role of the citizen in a participatory democracy.

After completing their study, classes can compete as teams in demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the Constitution. A multiple-choice test measuring student understanding of the instructional program is taken in the classroom at the close of the instructional period. This is the only time that a written examination is taken.

Classes that average a minimum set percentage on the written test will be eligible to compete in the hearing at the congressional district level.

Since entire classes of students compete as teams, the average score of a class on the test will be used rather than the scores of individual participants. This encourages students in each class to study and work together to achieve the highest possible class average. Through this method of conducting the competitive program, students over a wide range of achievement levels are able to participate.

The second part of the program is a congressional hearing, which is held before a moderator and a panel of judges drawn from the community. Classes are divided into six teams, each responsible for responding to questions on one of the six topics covered in the instructional program.

Winning classes in the hearing at the congressional district level go on to hearings at the state and national levels. Each year the final competition will be held during a special program scheduled for classes in Washington, D.C.

It is also possible for classes to take part in the instructional program but forego the competition. At the close of instruction in this mode, classes take a written test on the material covered. All students, whether in the competitive or the noncompetitive program, will receive certificates of achievement signed by their congressional representative or another prominent official if they achieve a set minimum score on the written test.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, Washington, D.C. 20408.

The National Archives, the repository for official documents of our national government, has been involved since 1970 in programs that introduce these resources to secondary school students. A part of this effort has been the development of a series of documentary learning packages. The seventh in the series, *The Constitution: Evolution of a Government* (available from SIRS, Inc., Boca Raton, Fla. 33427), was recently published. It contains 34 reproductions of documents and an extensive teacher's guide with suggested exercises.

This unit has three sections, each based on documents. The sections are:

1. *The Making of the Constitution* (10 exercises) contains documents such as the Articles of Association, the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, George Washington's draft copy of the Constitution, and a working draft of the Bill of Rights.
2. *The Beginnings of Government* (6 exercises) includes minutes of the Senate describing President Washington's oath of office ceremony, letters from such persons as Thomas Jefferson and John Jay, Franklin's petition to abolish slavery, and a U.S. loan certificate.
3. *The Evolution of a Constitutional Issue* (4 exercises) contains documents from the period 1789 to 1962 that have to do with the establishment and free exercise of religion.

It is important, we believe, that educators consider implementing the materials that seem to best meet their instructional objectives and the needs of their students at this particular time.

In addition to the 20 exercises that make up the core of the program, there are two introductory lessons designed to give students the skills necessary for analyzing documents and to make them aware of the process historians use when they interpret a particular event or era.

The various exercises have been designed for students of different ability levels. In some instances, two procedures have been provided, each tailored to meet different student needs.

In addition to the general goals for the program, specific objectives are provided for individual lessons. Each lesson also contains background information for the teacher and step-by-step procedures for achieving lesson objectives. Many of the lessons require that students use either their American history or American government textbooks to locate information that links to the documents that are to be analyzed.

YOUTH BICENTENNIAL INITIATIVE, Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship, American Bar Association, 750 North Lake Dr., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

The Youth Bicentennial Initiative consists of a number of programs and publications, some designed to involve students directly; others consist of resource materials and information for teachers. Three of these ABA efforts are discussed here: activity handbooks for young people, teaching guides for the television series, *We the People—A Bicentennial Salute to the Consititution,* and the ABA Publications Program activities associated with the bicentennial of the Constitution.

- *Activity Handbooks for Young People.* Two handbooks—designed for use by educators, lawyers, and com-

munity leaders—contain interactive strategies for complementing school studies and supplementing community programs.

The first handbook, designed for students in K-6, includes ideas that can be used in junior high school classes. It contains interactive lessons and activities that demonstrate that rules and law are integral to everyone's life, background information for teachers, a copy of a simplified Constitution, and resource listings and ideas for community celebrations, exhibits, forums, and school community events.

The upper-level book focuses more on school/community commemorations and contains ideas for simulations, debates, and forums, and an extensive list of resources. Both activity books are published by World Book, Inc.

• *Teaching Guide for Television Series.* The teaching guide is designed to promote and facilitate use of a four-part television series being produced by the ABA. The KQED series entitled "We the People" examines contemporary controversial issues.

The series aired weekly on PBS from September 22 through October 13, and is available from Films for the Humanities, Box 2053, 743 Alexander Rd., Princeton, N.J. 08543. It can be used as an adjunct to secondary school courses in American history, government, and civics.

The guide contains an overview of the Constitution, a description of how the television program may be used to enrich classroom instruction, a synopsis of each program, topics for classroom discussion, suggestions for student research topics, and a bibliography for student and teacher background reading.

• *ABA Publications Program.* Two ABA publications—both periodicals—are especially useful to teachers who wish to teach about the Constitution and constitutional government. The first is a bicentennial newsletter entitled *Salute to the Constitution,* which is published three times a year.

Salute provides an overview of bicentennial developments across the country and contains information on exemplary youth-focused resources and programs.

The May 1986 issue, printed on parchment-quality paper, had a foldout poster of the Preamble to the Constitution, which would be suitable for use in the classroom. Like the activity books, *Salute* is printed by World Book, Inc., and made available free of charge to educators and others responsible for bicentennial programs.

Included in ABA's ongoing publications program is its magazine, *Update on Law-Related Education,* which is published three times each year. Intended for law-related education teachers, every issue contains articles on the law, coverage of legal developments, including Supreme Court previews and decisions, classroom activities and strategies, and reviews of curriculum materials.

In addition to forthcoming *Updates,* the ABA has "bicentennial packets" consisting of selected back issues that have constitutional themes. A packet might contain, for example, "Foundations of Freedom" (Winter '86), "The Revolution in Search and Seizure" (Winter '85), "The Constitution in Crisis" (Winter '84), "Privacy vs. Power" (Spring '82), "Women and the Law" (Fall '81), "What Is Justice?" (Winter '81), "Speech: The 1st Freedom" (Spring '80), "Focus on Search and Seizure" (Spring '78), and "Freedom of Press on Trial" (Winter '78).

So, Into the Future

The celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution has provided the occasion for literally hundreds of organizations and individuals to prepare materials, devise strategies, and recommend activities for teaching about our great document of governance. Many of these should be useful to teachers.

It is important, we believe, that educators consider implementing the materials that seem to best meet their instructional objectives and the needs of their students at this particular time. The bicentennial of the oldest written constitution in the world is an event worthy of all our attention.

In terms of larger educational goals, however, it is not enough to think in terms of a "one shot" celebration. Understanding the Constitution (its historical antecedents, philosophical underpinnings, and structural dimensions), being able to apply its principles, and appreciating its importance are core components of citizenship education.

It behooves all of us to think of the bicentennial as the opportunity to start the process of upgrading the quality of instruction about the Constitution and, consequently, reinvigorating citizenship education in the years to come.

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Kudos

This *Curriculum Report* was developed by MARY JANE TURNER, associate director of the Center for Civic Education, drawing on *Education on the Constitution in Secondary Schools: Strategies and Materials for the Bicentennial and Beyond,* of which she was a co-author. The others were JOHN J. PATRICK, director of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science, and RICHARD C. REMY, director of the Citizenship Programs of the Mershon Center at the Ohio State University.

Why Celebrate the Constitution?

Why celebrate the Constitution? It was a remarkable success. On the occasion of the Centennial of the Constitution, the Englishman William Gladstone wrote: "I have always regarded that Constitution as the most remarkable work known to me in modern times to have been produced by the human intellect, at a single stroke (so to speak), in its application to political affairs." His words ring true 100 years later.

The Constitution is certainly worthy of praise and salute. Why *celebrate* it, though? Celebration is one way to get people enthusiastic about and in touch with our heritage. It unites the country, and it inspires interest and pride. In 1976, despite preoccupation with societal malaise, the celebration of the Bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence nevertheless stimulated over 5,000 programs and festivities.

These projects did more than focus upon the Declaration of Independence; they celebrated American life. Indeed, very few projects in 1976 were intended primarily to "educate." But the end result was in varying degrees education — not only of schoolchildren, but of all Americans. However successful the Declaration Bicentennial was, several things can and should be done differently from 1987 to 1989. The Constitution Bicentennial celebration should be more than tall ships and medallions. It should be "cerebration" with greater emphasis on civic education.

R. Freeman Butts, the William F. Russell Professor Emeritus at Columbia University, is a prominent advocate of civic education in the Bicentennial era. He believes that "the fundamental ideas and values upon which our Constitutional order is built should be the core of sustained and explicit study...carried on throughout the school years from kindergarten through high school." Butts is part of a great tradition of Americans concerned about education of the citizen. "If we think them not enlightened enough to exercise a wholesome discretion," wrote Thomas Jefferson, "the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

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